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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DAR ES SALAAM 001159

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SUBJECT: AFTER CUF DECLARES TALKS HAVE FAILED, NEW CCM
OFFER APPEARS

REF: A. DAR ES SALAAM 0888

[1](#)B. DAR ES SALAAM 1075

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission D. Purnell Delly for
reasons 1.4b and d.

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) The opposition Civic United Front (CUF) party chairman Dr. Ibrahim Lipumba declared August 7 that the Zanzibar reconciliation talks between ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and CUF had failed. In the days after this declaration, CCM proposed a way forward through the impasse through back channel contacts, and CUF privately accepted the proposal. The two parties continue to trade barbs in public, and it remains unclear if both sides will be able to move forward toward a solution to the political stalemate on Zanzibar. End summary.

CUF Declares Talks Have Failed

[1](#)2. (C) In an August 13 meeting, Ismail Jussa, a member of the CUF Central Committee and Advisor on Foreign Relations, told the DCM that nine days before the August 15 deadline for reaching an agreement in the Zanzibar reconciliation talks between CCM and CUF, CUF's leaders decided to manage their members' expectations for the talks -- and put additional pressure on CCM -- by releasing a statement that the talks had not produced a resolution.

[1](#)3. (U) At an August 7 press conference, CUF Chairman Dr. Ibrahim Lipumba declared that "the talks have failed." Lipumba stated that there had been no recent contact between the Secretary-Generals of the two parties, and that President Jakaya Kikwete had "failed to keep his promise" to resolve the political impasse on Zanzibar. He further stated that the two parties could no longer solve their problems on their own, and called for the international community to intervene, predicting that if nothing was done to resolve the Zanzibar impasse, the result could be an outbreak of violence in Zanzibar.

New CCM Offer Appears

14. (C) Jussa told the DCM that Lipumba's remarks prompted an immediate response from CCM, and on August 12, Rostam Aziz, CCM Member of Parliament (Igunga District), presented Jussa and CUF Secretary General Seif Sharif Hamad with a proposal for a way forward. (Note: It is conventional wisdom that Rostam Aziz wields extraordinary influence in CCM. Jussa recently told the DCM, "I don't know what magic that guy has, but he is the power behind the throne." End note.)

15. (C) Acknowledging to Jussa that CCM would need to offer CUF "more than words," Aziz proposed the following:

(i) By August 15, President Kikwete would make a statement reaffirming his personal commitment to the reconciliation talks and directing the parties to move forward;

(ii) President Karume (of Zanzibar) would appoint two CUF members to the Zanzibar House of Representatives within the next three weeks;

(iii) If Karume does so, CUF would formally recognize President Karume's government (CUF has refused to do this since the October 2005 presidential election in Zanzibar);

(iv) After the CCM Party Congress scheduled for early November 2007, President Karume would appoint at least three CUF ministers to his government in an interim arrangement; and

(v) The parties continue their dialogue, in order to incorporate the power-sharing arrangement they agree on into the constitution before 2010.

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16. (C) CUF Secretary General Hamad requested Aziz's offer in writing, but their request was refused, according to Jussa. Jussa speculated that Aziz wanted to keep the proposal from the general CCM membership, and certain CCM leaders, while he continued to negotiate within CCM. Jussa further stated that after discussion by the CUF Defense Committee, CUF agreed to Aziz's proposal.

17. (C) The DCM asked Jussa what CUF would do if nothing Aziz promised came to fruition. Jussa replied that CUF would be back where it started, at an impasse, adding, "We want to do everything we can to avoid violence." He further stated that if no power-sharing arrangement was agreed upon and put in place before the 2010 elections, CUF will petition for the United Nations or another international body to conduct and monitor the 2010 elections in Zanzibar. In the absence of a power-sharing government, CUF views this as the only way to ensure a transparent election free from Government of Zanzibar influence.

CCM Keeps Word on First Step

18. (U) On August 14, the State House released a written statement by President Kikwete, both in his capacity as president and as chairman of CCM, reaffirming his commitment to the reconciliation talks. He stated, in part: "We on the side of CCM do not think that we are at a point where we can say that we have failed, and therefore the talks should be dismantled.... I urge our fellow colleagues from CUF not to withdraw from these talks, but to continue with our dialogue." (Note: An Embassy translation of the President's complete Swahili text is available upon request.)

Comment

19. (C) Despite the potential for progress via the five-point agreement proposed by CCM and accepted by CUF, the outcome of the Zanzibar reconciliation talks remains unclear. On one hand, the two parties appear to have agreed on a way forward,

and President Kikwete has fulfilled the first condition of the agreement. On the other hand, the talks have been plagued by unfulfilled promises. CCM's refusal to put its agreement in writing and its demand that CUF recognize the Karume government early in the process (with the knowledge that withholding of recognition is the last card in CUF's hand) may be signs that CCM does not intend to keep its end of the bargain. In addition, CCM insisted that certain obligations be delayed until after the CCM Congress. President Kikwete's August 14 statement has also placed the burden of moving forward on CUF rather than CCM,

¶10. (C) While the slow pace at which CCM has allowed the talks to progress may be the result of the party's culture and internal wrangling, it could also be the result of CCM's attempt to drag the talks out as long as possible - perhaps until 2010. According to Jussa, CUF's only plan for moving forward in the wake of CCM stalling tactics would be a petition for international involvement to oversee the 2010 elections. The fact that CUF leadership has not proposed any other form of political action (non-violent protest, for example) may indicate a lack of confidence that they have sufficient control over CUF's members in Zanzibar to ensure that peaceful protests would not turn violent. End comment.
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